CASTLEMAINE NATURALIST

NOVEMBER 1981

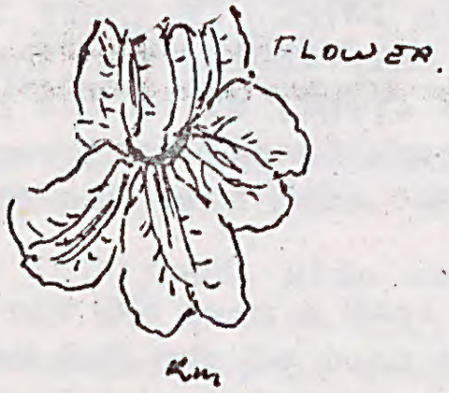
63

Flowers of the Castlemaine District

by Rita Mills.

NATIVE PANSY

Goodenia spp.



There are at least 2 Goodenia species in the district. This one is a small plant, growing as a rosette, with the bright yellow flowers emerging above the thick leaves which are glossy green above, and white underneath. The peduncles which rise above the leaves, bear a single flower and two bracts, halfway down the stem.

The flowers are interesting. The five petals, two above (which appear to be one), and three below, seem to have a thinner edge gathered onto a thicker centre, the back of which is brownish. The flowers and buds are bent, and the sepals are hairy, as too are the "stems", at least slightly so.

The Genus Goodenia is being reviewed at present, so the actual specific name is not yet certain.

President :	Mr G. Sitch	Ph 72 2734
Secretary :	Mrs M. Lindsay	72 2720
Treasurer :	Mr F. Meyer	72 1958
Newsletter:	Mr G. Broadway	72 2513

A B.O.C. Outing

by Stan Bruton

The directions in the B.O.C. magazine were for Melbourne folk to come up via Redesdale, so Frank Meyer and I went straight there, then followed B.O.C. signs back this way a bit, then North several Km to Lyall Glen - the Ipsen's lovely 7 acre homestead.

We arrived soon after 10 a.m. just in time to hear quietly - spoken Jack Ipsen telling the 30 or so assembled bird observers his plans for the day. He would show us the the nests on and very close to his property, and we were made welcome to wander around the surrounding grazing property. At 2 p.m. we were to pack a few of the cars full, so as to reduce parking problems, and go several Km to Kangaroo Creek Forest Reserve, then a short trip to Lake Eppalock down Twin Rivers road.

As he showed us around, Jack told us some history of the area which had been a gold mining town started in 1872. In their large front garden is a rough stone chimney, the only indication that this was once a Chinese garden. Across the creek, up on the hill paddock, a few bricks between two big red gums is all that remains of Lyall Post Office, and the school down the road has gone generations ago

With a mirror on a long stick he gave us each a peep at the fluffy chicks which already filled the neat little nest of the Red Wattlebirds. Unlike the Collins' Wattlebirds they do not dominate the local bird population!

At the front gate we saw the nest of the Little Cuckoo-Shrike, just a few sticks in a flat fork, high in a box type of Eucalypt.

Close by on the well wooded roadside he pointed out the generous-sized, craftsman-like nest of an Olive-Backed Oriole. We had heard its melodious call amongst the chorus which was welcoming us to the glen.

In the trees about the well filled dam we were shown nests of White-plumed Honey-eaters, Willy wagtails, Mudlarks, and Restless Flycatchers.(Scissors Grinders). The Flycatcher was sitting on her nest, a distinctively shaped structure 6 or 8 m high in a slender gum tree. I was told afterwards that the loud, clear "treee, treeee treeee" calls I had been puzzled by, had been made by that bird while on the nest.

Up past the house, by the back fence, three Blackfaced Cuckoo-Shrikes seemed to be sharing a casual sort of nest high in an old Long-leafed Box tree, while nearby were two trees, each with a Willy Wagtail's nest.

It was near here too that the Dusky Woodswallows had their cosy woolly nest, also high in a eucalypt. Following up a briefly-glimpsed pair of swift, slender lorikeets, I met Jack, who said they'd be the pair of Little Lorikeets which nest somewhere nearby each year. He showed some of us then where the Brown Treecreepers had a nest, up in or on a dead branch of a Yellow Box tree, of which many are blossoming there at present.

Then a group of nice young bird enthusiasts showed us a pair of Black-chinned Honeyeaters flitting about high in some nearby trees. As we had our picnic lunch we watched the Treecreepers, Swallows, Sparrows, a Diamond Firetail and a pair of Red-rumped Parrots. A White-faced Heron, Magpies, and a Kookaburra, plus the unmistakeable call of the Pallid Cuckoo and the cheery song of the Rufous Songlark, made my bird list there up to 21 species.

Not on the birdlist however are the pretty little Yellow-footed Mouse which peered out from behind a rough piece of Yellow-Box bark, nor the stones brought from various spots in different states by a friend and ranged round the little rockery at Ipsen's window.

From there they can watch the antics of another tiny Antechinus mouse or of the three possums that come there for scraps.

The afternoon, when we travelled with another Castlemaine bird observer and a nice couple from out Eltham way was just as enjoyable We three decided it would make a delightful venue for a Castlemaine club outing, next Spring.

Notes from the Committee Meeting 22-10-81

For Sale, Special Offer, Hurry for these bargains
Rare, Vanishing Australian Birds; $7
Birds of Australian Gardens, Peter Trusler; $12

Photoflora will not be held in 1982, owing to lack of support by the general public.

Treasurer's Report

Cash in hand	$3-84
Bank	25-57
Total	29-41

Next meeting

The next Committee meeting will be held on the Fourth Thursday of the month, November 26. Members please note.

NATURAL HISTORY WEEKEND

On the weekend of Saturday 21st and Sunday 22nd November, 1981, The Ballarat Regional Association for Community Educators, together with the Creswick Continuing Education Group, will be conducting a Natural History and Environmental Studies Weekend at Adekate Camp, near Dean.

The all inclusive fee for the weekend is $30-00. This covers all meals from lunchSaturday to lunch Sunday and basic camping accommodation at the camp. Accommodation is in Army style huts, bunks and mattresses are supplied, but participants are asked to bring their own pillows and bedding materials. Most rooms hold four bunks.

The program for the weekend is as follows :-

Saturday	10 - 10.30 a.m.	Registration
	10.30 - 12 noon	History of the Area
	12.00 - 1.30	Lunch
	1.30 - 3.30	Major Vegetation
	4.30 - 6.30	Bird watching or relax
	7.00 - 8.00	Dinner
	8.00 -10-00 Ca	Hollow dependant animals - talk followed by spotlight excursion
Sunday	6.30 8.00	Bird watching (optional)
	8.00 9.00	Breakfast
	9.00 -10.30	Geology of the Area
	11.00 -12.00	Ground Flora
	12.00 - 1.00 p.m.	Fungi and Lichens
	1.00 - 2.00	Weekend concludes with Barbecue

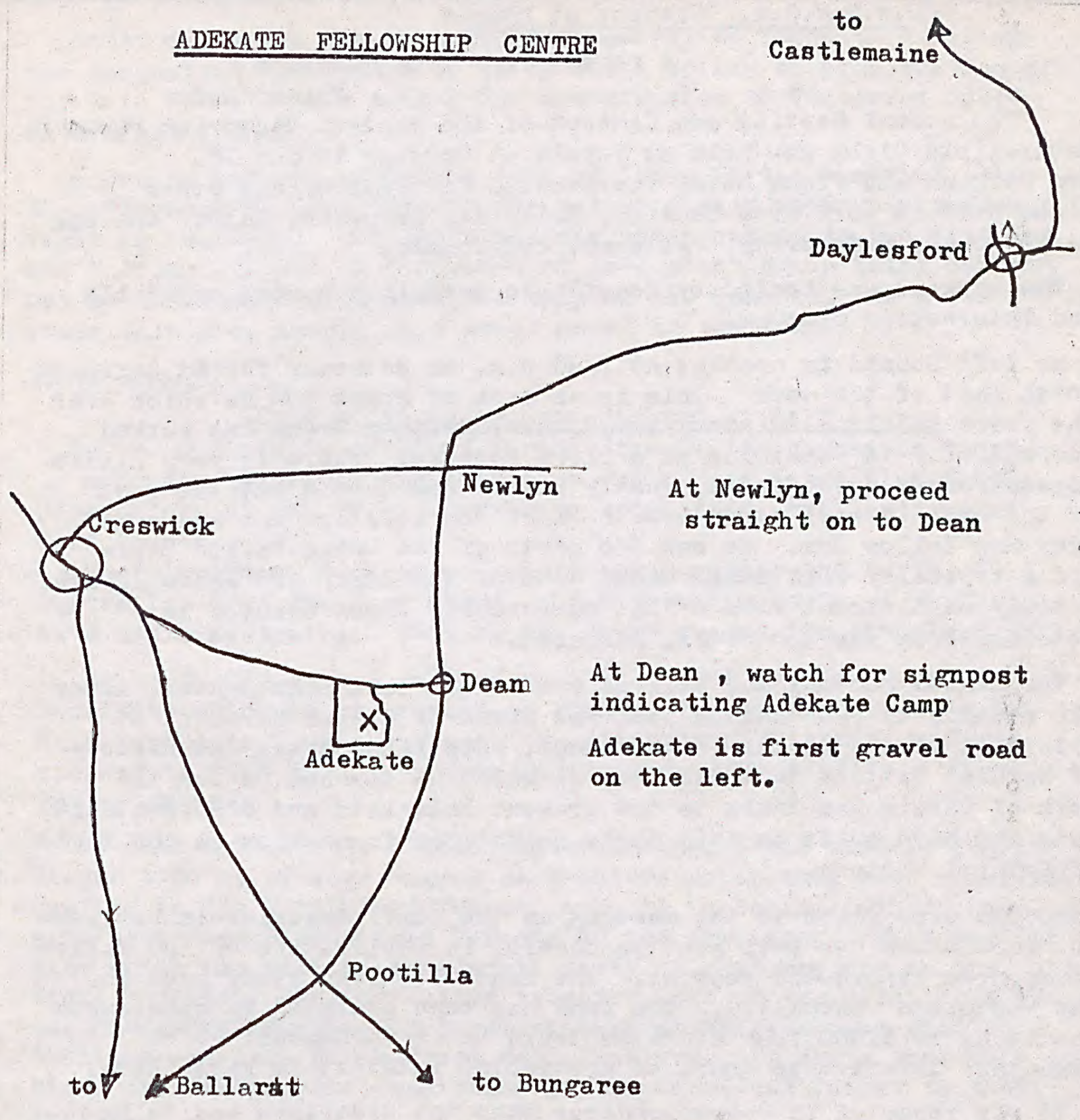
Further details may be had from

Mr Ivan Beechey
Executive Officer. B.R.A.C.E.
4 East Street, Sth
Ballarat 3350 Phone (053) 31 1834

applications are requested by November 13th.

General meetings are held on the second Friday of the month at 8 p.m. in the Education Centre, Castlemaine.
Outings usually take place on the following Saturday, leaving the Ed. Centre at 1.30, after organising people in to cars, etc.
Business meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of the month, at 8 p.m. in the Castlemaine Education Centre, Mostyn Street.
Any alterations in the above arrangements will be notified.
Members of the public and intending members are cordially invited to attend meetings or outings.

ADEKATE FELLOWSHIP CENTRE



At Newlyn, proceed straight on to Dean

At Dean , watch for signpost indicating Adekate Camp

Adekate is first gravel road on the left.

A Snippet of History , from - the files of the Mt Alexander Mail Tuesday, Sept. 22, 1868 : A giant tree of the Eucalyptus species was felled lately in the Dandenong Ranges. The following particulars are given by the Crown Ranger who measured the tree after it was felled.

At one foot from the ground the circumference was 69 feet; at 12 ft. the diameter was eleven foot four inches, at 210 ft, 5 feet. The height of the tree was 330 feet.

R.B.

W.V.F.N.C.A. Campout at Donald

A report from club delegate

Frank Meyer

The annual Meeting and Campout of the Western Victorian Field Naturalists Clubs was held at Donald on October 17 and 18. Ern Perkins and Frank Meyer represented Castlemaine and other clubs present were from Bendigo, Ballarat, Creswick, Colac, Geelogg Maryborough, Mid-Murray, Portland, and Donald.

The weekend was hosted by Donald who organised a most enjoyable and interesting program.

We left Donald in coaches at 1-30 p.m. on Saturday for Mt Jeffcott North East of the town. This is an area of about 500 Ha which over the years the local History and Natural History Group has worked successfully in retaining as a flora reserve. There is very little vegetation on Mt.Jeffcott, mostly Buloke and Sheoke but the rest of the area is well covered with Black Box , Yellow Gum and some Grey and Yellow Box. We saw two nests of the Wegee-tailed Eagle and a typically well constructed nest of the Black and white Chough. A truly magnificent view of the surrounding wheat country is obtained from the top of Mt. Jeffcott.

The Annual Meeting was held at 6 at the Donald High School. After the meeting an outstanding talk was given by Mr Ian Maroske, Principal of the Horsham High School. His subject was the History of Natural History in Australia, in which he touched on the the work of Darwin and Banks to the present Botanists and Conservationists who have built on this early scientific foundation in the field of Natural History.

Reports were given to the meeting on the Cliff Beauglehole Publishing fund which has been most successful in publication of the Mallee Study area report and reprint. The East Gippsland study area and the Victorian Checklist. The fund has been assisted by commission amounting to $1400 from Kingston Tours based at Stawell which organises Safari type tours of particular interest to Field Nats.

It was reported in Correspondence that the Grampians was to be declared a National Park in respect to half the area, the remainder to pass to the Forest Commission. Clubs in the Western Victoria district were asked to consider this proposition which is supported by the Conservation Foundation and pass on their decisions whether as individuals or as Clubs to the A.C.F.

In regard to correspondence from the Tasmanian Wilderness Society it was decided to ask branches to discuss the matter and convey their decisions to the Society.

Letter cards from the Australian Conservation Foundation asking the Queensland Government to carry out a policy of preservation of our Rain Forests were tabled for distribution to Victorian Field Naturalist Clubs.

On Sunday morning we made a tour of lakes in the district. In the afternoon we went through the native plants reserve situated right in the town. Virtually all the trees native to the district can be found there. A programme of tree planting is being carried out by the Donald club with the help of the Council. In a few years this area should be a great asset to the town.

STOP PRESS :

Blue Faced Honeyeater Sighted at Golf Course

Nov 2. Our club's resident Birdo, Stan Bruton, phoned in today to announce the first sighting thus far of the large Blue-faced Honeyeater, at one of his favourite localities, the Castlemaine Golf Course.

The Blue-faced Honeyeater may be found across the North of Australia, down the East coast, and across the North of Victoria into South Australia. This is the first record for the club.

While typing this I noticed some lorikeets in one of my Eucalypts which is at present in flower. Thinking they would be Musk Lorikeets I went out with the binoculars to check, and was pleased to find that they were Purple-crowned, which is a first for my garden.

The Saga Continues : A while later another Birdo member, Maggie Oliver told me of some Regent Honeyeaters which have been observed nesting in the Muckleford Forest, and, it is believed there have also been some Blue-winged Parrots in the same area. This was the area which was visited by a small party of club members on the final Wednesday evening outing recently, one of the highlights of which was the sighting of large numbers of White-browed Wood Swallows and some Black-faced Wood Swallows. It seems that some birds are finding the conditions in the burnt-out forest to their liking.

A suggestion for any members who did not visit the Muckleford Forest recently, is to take a late afternoon drive out there, head South from the Gowar School through the forest, and gaze out to your right. (If you are the driver remember to glance at the road occasionally, and do watch for fallen trees). You will be entranced by the sight of the sun shining through the young leaves clothing all the burnt and scarred trunks, while the forest floor is carpeted by a purple mist of Chocolate Lilies growing thickly in places.

Club Programme

Friday, November 13

Meeting : Subject. "The Birds of Mosquito Flat"
Speaker, Dr F. Harrap of the Ballarat F.N.C.

Saturday, Nov 14

Outing : Bells Swamp. Depart Ed.Centre at 1.30 p.m.
Leader. Max Winterbottom

Friday, December 11.

Meeting: Guest speaker will be Mr Tim Entwisle of Yapeen. The subject of his talk will be "Algae"
Since completing his education at Castlemaine High School Tim has done a Science degree at the University of Melbourne. As this will be the last meeting for 1981, it has been suggested that we might bring along a few goodies for an enhanced supper table.

At the same it seems appropriate to thank all those people who have made a significant contribution to the pleasant atmosphere of our meetings, by organising suppers for our enjoyment.

Saturday, December 12.

Excursion : Hamilton's Crossing.
Leader will be Mrs Cheesman. Depart Ed. Centre at 1.30.

FEEDING and ATTRACTING NATIVE BIRDS to your GARDEN

by Terry Collins

Part 5 : Bird Bath

This is a must for the garden. Preferably it should be wide and fairly shallow with sloping sides, Place it under the edge of a large bushy shrub or tree. This gives the little birds the security of the overhanging branches while drinking or bathing. Always keep the water fresh, even in Winter as the small birds like a bath even on a cold day.

Another help to birds is to provide some wool or fibre for nests during the breeding season. We use a mesh bag similar to the ones oranges or onions come in. Place a quantity of sheeps wool or other material in the bag and hang up in an accessible spot. Even an old piece of rope with the ends teased out and hung on a fence is welcome.

It is hoped you can be successful and attract the native birds to your garden. It takes time, but in our case we persevered for a long time till the shrubs grew and now we have met success, although we have some things in our favour; no cats, sparrows or blackbirds.